Camp Woods Johnston, Four miles
South of Nashville Tennessee

Dear Lydia, I received your letter
of the 30th ult, for which you have my
thanks it was longer than usual, which
made it the more welcome — When you get
through with your work I shant trouble
you with anything less than two sheets
and I see that you can write a very good
letter if you try. If you will only write as
you would talk you may rest assured that
it will not only be gladly received but it
will be interesting notwithstanding you used to
talk so much to me that I cannot pay no
attention to what you said, I can read it with
pleasure, and if I were with you I think I
should be willing to sit for one day at least and
hear you, if I could have the priveledge
I think we will enjoy this life when I get
home dont you, I am going to do everything
I can to make our life a pleasant one after the
war is over & I know you will
It would have been a decided pleasure to me
to have taken Supper with you with that bill
of fare that you mentioned, One bill of fare
varies from hard tack, Sow belly, & coffee to

Coffee Sow belly & Hard tack, with an occasional dose of beans, but for a week we have been Luxuriating on flour, We have had it so as to issue it in part to the men, for our Mess We have got a Dutch oven, and with the help of some baking powders we manage to have what we call good biscuit, but I fear they would hardly pass for that with you, but I relish everything I eat, and it does me good, for I am growing fleshy every day but I eat enough to fat a hog — I have not arrived at that kind of an appetite that I can eat this Smoked Side meat without having it fried up pretty hard but I can destroy a pretty large side of Beef, which we have nearly twice a week

I think the army is the place for me, and I suppose if it agrees with me as well all of the time that you will consent to let me Join the Regular Service Dont you — Well I shant if you do — The Mail comes here since I wrote you is of no great importance, and what there is, is not very pleasant to write about

Yesterday Some Foraging teams from Sheridans Division being east of us, were sent on an expedition, and lost their teams, and this same day one Brigade, We has it was the 9th Maine and one a Scout, and ran into a big nest of rebels and all got taken prisoners — also the Lieut Colonel of the 7th Vt, in our Brigade Was out Scouting some

and got swallowed up.

Our Brigade is under orders to be ready to march at a moments notice, with three days cooked rations in their Haversacks, and I heard a dignitary of the Brigade say that if our Brigade the Quartermasters with the trains would be ordered to Nashville inside of the fortifications, — as near as we can learn the rebels are Sixty thousand strong at Murfreesboro and between here and there and it is thought they will offer us battle, well we are ready for them if they will meet us there but I do not think the army will be moved very far south, until there are other means of obtaining subsistence

It is ten o'clock of a warm moonlight night and every sound of life is hushed, in the camp except the solitary tread of the Sentinel as he walks to & fro on his beat, — everything is so quiet that I feel more like taking a seat by the fire and think of you, of home and the many friends I have left, of when I shall return and what will be our future, than I do like writing by the way do you ever dream of me — I do of you often and I never had an unpleasant dream of you or anything else since I have been away from home

Well I will take my pipe and a seat by the fire and dream of you for a little while and then lay down in my nest of straw

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Thursday Morning 10 o'clock Nov 9th

This morning we were aroused from sleep by the beating of the long roll, with orders to "fall in" the attack was expected on our right, Some skirmishing had taken place and our pickets driven in a little ways but they made no further demonstrations and the regiment stacked arms after standing two hours. Such alarms will no doubt be of frequent occurrence

You say that you are not lonesome all of the time, I wish you could enjoy yourself all of the time, but I know that is impossible under the circumstances, For my part, I have enough through the day to occupy my mind without thinking much of home, but after the days work is done and I am relieved from the cares of my position somewhat, then it is that I get lonesome sometimes and wish I could be with you, Did you ever know just how necessary your humble servant was to your happiness, before, Well so it is with me, Still it is not strange that you are more lonesome than what I am as I have more to occupy my time

Well the Mail is about ready to leave so I must close this, I think you had better go to Minnetonka as soon as Christmas, and any letters that may reach there about that time I shall direct to Minnetonka — I wish every time you write you would tell me where my last letter was dated from, and the date, — As I close this we hear the sound of Artillery in advance of us, what it means We do not know, We will know soon, will write in a day or two

Yours your affectionate Husband Orrin Smith